E X H I B I T I O N

N E W S L E T T E R

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ART GALLERY of ONTARIO
REFERENCE
LIBRARY

Extension Services
June 1985/III

Attached please find information sheets on new exhibitions available for circulation. Please note that exhibitions are designed for Provincial or National circulation. Those designed for the province give priority to booking requests from within the province of Ontario and the cost is strictly the exhibition fee. Provincial exhibitions that are not fully booked may take on requests from out of province. The fee to out-of-province clients would be the exhibition fee plus two-way shipping costs. Exhibitions designed for National circulation have an exhibition fee plus outgoing shipping costs.

We are listing exhibitions that are in the planning stages as well under the heading of FUTURE EXHIBITIONS. Please contact Noni Regan, Scheduling Officer, Extension Services (416) 977-0414 for further information. Use the enclosed Booking Form to indicate your preferred exhibition dates.

FUTURE EXHIBITIONS

Toronto Drawing (working title)
(Circulated PROVINCIALLY)
Dates available: November 1986 - April 1987

20th Century British Painting from the Art Gallery of Ontario Collection (working title)
(Circulated PROVINCIALLY)
Dates available: March 1987 - February 1988

have developed a substantial national school of watercolour painting. British artists have found that watercolour is eminently suitable for recreating the effects of atmosphere - mist, rain, sunlight, and even aerial perspective - on the landscape before them.

The Art Gallery of Ontario received many watercolour "gems" between 1959 and 1965 from W.B. Dalton, an English potter living in Connecticut. This collection has been added to by gift and purchase until it now represents an almost complete picture of the development of British watercolour painting and provides us with an opportunity to explore the artists' interpretations of both their, and our own, preferred places.

The exhibition is transported by air and/or truck and installed under the supervision of Art Gallery of Ontario staff. Organized for provincial circulation by the Art Gallery of Ontario.

Curated by Kim Sloan, Guest Curator, Prints and Drawings.

Space: 30-45 running metres (100-150 r.ft.)

Weight: not available

Fee: $600

Date available for circulation: January 1987 - December 1987
Note: circuit limited to 3 centres

Security: Electronic alarm system. In view of an attendant. Small works must be screwed to the wall.

Lighting: Incandescent only; maximum of 50 lux for the works on paper

Temperature and Humidity: Maximum fluctuation of ±10% from a norm of 50% humidity and between 20^{O}-22^{O}C (68^{O}-72^{O}F)

Augustus John (British, 1878-1961), The Marchesa Casati, 1918/19, oil on canvas, 96.5 x 68.6 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto, Purchase, 1934

MASTERPIECE EXHIBITION SERIES - AUGUSTUS JOHN'S THE MARCHESA CASATI

Augustus John was the pre-eminent British portraitist of his time. Born in 1878 in Wales, he studied at London's Slade School of Fine Art where he rapidly acquired a reputation as a gifted and prolific draughtsman. A true bohemian, he sported long hair and a beard, frequented the city's seamier cafés, and in search of total personal freedom made contact with local gypsies, adopting their dress and learning their language. By the advent of the First World War John had established a significant reputation in Britain, as much for his bold landscape and figural works as for his passionate, rebellious personality.

To survive financially, the artist turned to painting portraits of London's Belgravia residents - the glittering aristocracy, the politicians and the men of letters - Lady Cynthia Asquith, Churchill, George Bernard Shaw, Hardy and Joyce. The result was the period's finest chronicle of famous faces - and lasting evidence of John's psychological penetration and painterly bravura.

In 1919, after working for Lord Beaverbrook and his project to document Canadian participation in the war, John was invited to Paris to paint pictures commemorating the Peace Conference. Mingling with the "rich rich" he was introduced to the flamboyant Marchesa Casati, the talk of Paris. In his

journal, John wrote: "Her bearing, personality, and peculiar elegance seemed to throw the rest of the company into the shade. Enormous eyes, set off by mascara, gleamed beneath a framework of canary-yellow curls." The Marchesa, born Luisa Ammon, daughter of a wealthy Milanese industrialist, was a tall, slender, white-skinned eccentric who married (and, unusual for her time, later divorced) a scion of one of Italy's noblest families. Besides three palaces in Milan and one on the Grand Canal in Venice, "La Casati" owned a villa in Capri and a vast pink marble mansion outside of Paris. Her dresses, designed by Bakst and Poiret, were legendary; her jewels, including a necklace of live snakes, were equally unrivalled. She had a taste for black slaves, greyhounds, fast cars, exotic soirées and sorcery. One of her many lovers, the Italian poet d'Annunzio, called her "the only woman who astonishes me." Having run through several fortunes, she died destitute in London in 1957.

In the Art Gallery of Ontario's painting, John portrays La Casati at the height of her fame. Originally a full-length portrait but cut down by the artist, the work depicts her in clothes not traditionally worn in formal portraits - pyjamas! Made of a light, almost transparent fabric, they float elegantly around her slim pale arms and torso. With her left hand placed provocatively on her hip she turns to confront us - her lips moist, her large dark eyes glowing under a fiery red wig - a powerful image of female coyness and seduction. Mona Lisa reborn in our own time.

Few of John's portraits of any period can rival the splendour and dash of this work - undoubtedly inspired by the sitter's refreshing eccentricities. The dazzling colours, the vivid brushstrokes and assertive design combine to create an unforgettable homage to one of this century's rare femme fatales. Few artists indeed were able to resist the temptation to immortalize the Marchesa. Boldini, Larionov, Tissot, van Dongen, Epstein, Balla, Man Ray, Beaton and many others made her the most painted, sculpted, drawn and photographed woman of her day.

The exhibition is transported by air and/or truck and installed under the supervision of Art Gallery of Ontario staff. Organized for provincial circulation by the Art Gallery of Ontario. Fifty brochures are included in the exhibition fee.

Curated by David Wistow, Adult Programs, Education Services.

Space: 30.5 running metres (100 r.ft.). Exact contents not available; 1 painting plus book illustrations and photographic material, plus several information panels

Weight: not available

Fee: $500

Date available for circulation: April, May, September, October 1987 (maximum of three bookings)

Security: Electronic alarm system. In constant view of an attendant. Small works must be screwed to the wall. The need for 24 hour surveillance will be determined on an individual basis.

Lighting: Incandescent only; maximum 150 lux for paintings, 50 lux for works on paper.

Temperature and Humidity: Maximum fluctuation of ±10% from a norm of 50% humidity and between 20°-22°C (68°-72°F)